Research Notes for Catherine Flaherty McEvoy Gorman (1813 - 1890)

Research Overview:

Catherine Flaherty appears in the record as a woman whose life is unusually well documented because she lived in Montreal, Canada, until middle age. French Canadian Catholic clergy kept detailed parish records, anchoring her early and repeatedly in the historical record. Born in Montreal in 1813 to Irish Catholic parents, she is documented through her family of origin, two marriages, and the births of at least nine children across Canada and the United States. Her life can be followed with relative continuity from Montreal to Kalamazoo, yet the record offers little insight into the choices or circumstances that shaped these transitions.

Catherine married John Patrick McEvoy in Montreal in 1840 and spent the next decade bearing and baptizing a large family there. The parish records created during these years fix the family in place at a time when many immigrant households appear only briefly in the record. After the family's move to Michigan in the early 1850s, Catherine was a widow by 1857, heading a household of sons in Kalamazoo. Census entries enumerate the family but do not explain how the household functioned after her husband's death. John McEvoy's thin probate file leaves Catherine's early widowhood poorly defined, despite her documented role in settling his estate. Several of her older sons—Luke, Charles, and Thomas—later served in the Civil War.

In 1863, Catherine remarried Anthony Gorman and remained in Kalamazoo for the rest of her life. She appears under multiple surnames—Flaherty, McEvoy, and Gorman—sometimes simultaneously, reflecting marital status rather than a fixed public identity. At her death in 1890, records refer to her interchangeably as Mrs. McEvoy and Mrs. Gorman, and her gravestone bears the surname of her first husband despite her long second marriage. Estate papers signed by her sons identify surviving children but provide little information about their locations or circumstances. Catherine's life is therefore well anchored by dates, places, and family structure, yet defined as much by what the record does not explain as by what it confirms.

Time Line:

20 Jul 1813 - at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[1]

1820 - Birth of sister Mary Flaherty (1820 - 1889) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[2]

1822 - Birth of sister Hannah Flaherty (1822 - 1867) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada [3]

1824 - Birth of brother William Flaherty (1824 -) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[4]

1827 - Birth of sister Helene Flaherty (1827 -) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[5]

1829 - Birth of sister Anna Flaherty (1829 -) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

1831 - Birth of sister Elizabeth Flaherty (1831 - 1847) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

25 Feb 1840 - Marriage to John Patrick McEvoy at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[6]

They were married by Mr. Joseph Viceuf of the Church of Montreal. This record lists both sets of parents. Witnesses James McVey, Edward Quinn, and Thomas McGrath

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[1] Birth record

[2] Quebec, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1967, Mary Flaherty

[3] Quebec, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1967, Nora Flaherty

[4] Quebec, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1967, William Flaherty

[5] Canada, Québec, registres paroissiaux catholiques, 1621-1979," database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org

[6] "Canada, Ontario Marriages, 1869-1927", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KZBM-CR6: Sat Mar 09 19:10:48 UTC 2024), Entry for John McVey and John McVey, 09 Sep 1897.

29 May 1840 - Birth of son Mark McEvoy (1840 -) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[7]

Mark McEvoy is not named in Catherine Flaherty McEvoy Gorman's Michigan will; his later identity has not been documented. Did he die young in Canada, or is he the Mark McAvoy in upstate New York?

16 Dec 1840 - Birth of son James McEvoy (1840 -) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[8]

18 Aug 1841 - Birth of son Charles Patrick McEvoy (1841 - 1907) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[9]

9 May 1842 - Birth of daughter Honorah McVey (1842 - 1904) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[10]

13 Jan 1844 - Birth of son John McVey (1844 - 1926) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[11]

John Flaherty and Honora Brown are likely the same individuals as Catherine's parents as listed on her marriage certificate with John McVey. This means that John's maternal grandparents were likely also his godparents.

19 May 1846 - Birth of daughter Jane McVey (1846 -) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[12]

5 Aug 1847 - Death of sister Elizabeth Flaherty (1831 - 1847) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

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[7] Quebec, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1967, Mary McEvoy

[8] Birth record son James McEvoy

[9] Quebec, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1967, Patrick McEvoy

[10] Quebec, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1967, Honorah McVey

[11] Quebec, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1967, John McVey

[12] Death record sister Elizabeth Flaherty

1847 - Birth of son Thomas McEvoy (1847 - before 1865) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[13]

15 Apr 1849 - Birth of son Hughes McEvoy (1849 -) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[14]

20 Jan 1850 - Birth of son James H McEvoy (1850 - 1908) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[15]

1853 - Arrival from Canada [16]

Research: Which border crossing? It's probably in New York. Did other family members come at the same time?

May 1853 - Birth of son Alfred J McEvoy (1853 - 1907) at Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, Michigan. [17]

Birth records in Michigan before 1867 are scarce. The date is calculated from the 1860 US census.

7 Oct 1857 - Death of husband, John McEvoy at Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, Michigan, [18]

1860 - US Census at Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, Michigan.[19]

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[13] *Find a Grave*, database and images (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/39098376/thomas-mcevoy: accessed September 28, 2024), memorial page for Thomas McEvoy (1847–1864), Find a Grave Memorial ID 39098376, citing Riverside Catholic Cemetery, Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County, Michigan, USA; Maintained by mbm1311 (contributor 46958655).

[14] "Canada, Québec naissances et baptêmes, 1662-1898", database, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F2CN-YQR : 9 February 2020), Catherine Flaherty in entry for Hugues McVey, 1849.

[15] Quebec, Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection), 1621-1967, James McVey

[16] Immigration record

[17] "Find a Grave Index," database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVKD-N3K8: 19 October 2022), Alfred J. McEvoy, ; Burial, Silver Creek, Lawrence, Mississippi, United States of America, Silver Creek Methodist Cemetery; citing record ID 42517361, *Find a Grave*, http://www.findagrave.com.

[18] Kalamazoo County Clerk's Death Record Book 2, p. 86, item 209

[19] "United States Census, 1860", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MW6W-7B2: Mon Jul 08 10:38:54 UTC 2024), Entry for Catheine Mc Avoy and Patrick Mc Avoy, 1860.

Catherin McAvoy,46

Patrick McAvoy, 19

John McAvoy

Thomas McAvoy, 13

James McAvoy, 11

Alfred McAvoy, 8

10 Aug 1863 - Marriage to Anthony Gorman at Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, Michigan.[20]

1865 - Death of son Thomas McEvoy (1847 - 1865) possibly at Michigan.[21]

Sep 1867 - Death of sister Hannah Flaherty (1822 - 1865) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[22]

1870 - US Census at Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, Michigan.[23]

Kate Holloway, 40

Anna Holloway, 14

Mary Holloway, 12

Anthony Gorman, 68

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[20] Marriage to Anthony Gorman

[21] "Find a Grave Index," database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVKD-57N3: 13 June 2023), Thomas McEvoy, ; Burial, Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, Michigan, United States of America, Riverside Catholic Cemetery; citing record ID 39098376, *Find a Grave*, http://www.findagrave.com.

[22] Find a Grave Index," database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:Q2BY-NBH2: 16 December 2020), Hannah Flaherty Ryan, ; Burial, Montreal, Montreal Region, Quebec, Canada, Cimetière Notre-Dame-des-Neiges; citing record ID 173378332, *Find a Grave*, http://www.findagrave.com.

[23] "United States Census, 1870", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MHHB-9HL: Tue Mar 05 09:06:32 UTC 2024), Entry for Catherine Gorman and Anna Holloway, 1870.

Catherine Gorman, 56

Thomas Gorman, 37

Jennie Gorman, 30

1880 - US Census at Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, Michigan.[24]

Anthony Gorman, 78
Catherine Gorman, 65

23 Feb 1882 - Death of husband Anthony Gorman (1802 - 1882) at Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, Michigan.[25]

5 Apr 1889 - Death of sister Mary Flaherty (1820 - 1889) at Montreal, Quebec, Canada.[26]

8 Nov 1890 - Death at Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, Michigan.[27]

Catherine is buried at Riverside Cemetery alongside her first husband, John McEvoy. Her gravestone lists her as Catherine McEvoy, while her death records identify her as Catherine Gorman, reflecting her second marriage. Her 1890 obituary refers to her both as Mrs. Gorman and Mrs. McEvoy and notes that three sons were living in Florida, without naming them. Catherine left no will. Estate papers signed by her son Luke McEvoy identify her surviving children and note that all but one were living in Georgia, with the whereabouts of James reported as unknown.

Burial at Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, Michigan.[28]

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[24] United States Census, 1880", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MWSN-HRY: Thu Jul 18 11:56:18 UTC 2024), Entry for Anthony Gorman and Catharine Gorman, 1880.

[25] Michigan, Deaths and Burials Index, 1867-1995, Anthony Gorman

[26] Death of sister Mary Flaherty

[27] Kalamazoo County Clerk's Death Record Book 2, p. 86, item 209

[28] Find a Grave Index," database, *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVKD-57FR: 23 August 2022), Catherine Flaherty McEvoy, ; Burial, Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, Michigan, United States of America, Riverside Catholic Cemetery; citing record ID 39098369, *Find a Grave*, http://www.findagrave.com.

Probate - at Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo, Michigan.[29]

A researcher in Kalamazoo went to the courthouse to look at McEvoy probate documents and made this comment:

"I looked at six film reels today, and, no offense, some of these files are the lamest I have ever seen. The file for John McEvoy especially does not have the standard petition to appoint an administrator, which includes the names of all the heirs by law. If I hadn't just noticed the very bottom of the page, I would have thought it was useless from a genealogical point of view. But, at the bottom, it is signed Catherine McEvoy, widow of the deceased.

Catherine McEvoy Gorman did not have a will, but there were estate papers for her signed by son Luke McEvoy, and it names her other children, "all who reside in Georgia except James who was listed, as whereabouts are not known."

[29] Probate records